

VOL. XLIX. No. 15,756.

## CHLOROFORMED TO DEATH

MRS. KNIFFIN, THE WIFE OF A PROMINENT TRENTON DENTIST, FOUND DEAD IN BED.

HER COUSIN, MISS PURCELL, UNCONSCIOUS FROM THE SAME DRUG—THE LATTER SAYS BURGARS COMMITTED THE CRIME—THE POLICE SCEPTICAL.

[BY TELEGRAPH TO THE TRIBUNE.]

Trenton, N. J., Jan. 3.—Mrs. Myra Kniffin, age thirty-three, wife of Dr. Arthur S. Kniffin, one of the best-known dentists in this city, was chloroformed by some one at a late hour last night or early this morning. Her dead body was found on the bed in her room at half-past 7 this morning, and since that hour the police have been working in vain to find the murderer. No occurrence in Trenton in recent years has so startled the community. Mrs. Kniffin was a good-looking woman of light complexion and slight figure, and was widely known in social circles. Her husband's office is over Albert W. Paterson's drug store, at No. 206 South Broad-st., and their living apartments are in the same building. South Broad-st. is a main thoroughfare, bright with electric lights, lined with stores, shops and offices, and regularly patrolled by the police.

Yesterday morning Dr. Kniffin left Trenton for Broadway, a village of Warren County, N. J. Dr. William H. Shannon, his partner, took charge of the dental parlor, and early last evening locked up the place for the night, removing what money there was in the office. Dr. Kniffin's little son had gone to the house of his grandmother, Mrs. Rastin Murphy, in Cooper-st., and it is said that he was kept there over night owing to the fact that he was frightened at home in the latter part of November, when burglars, during the absence of Dr. Kniffin, entered the house and created some excitement. Shortly before 10 o'clock last night Mrs. Kniffin went to bed. Miss Emma Purcell, a young woman of twenty-two, shared her room. Miss Purcell is a typewriter, employed at the Empire Pottery, and has lived with the Kniffins several years. She is a cousin of Mrs. Kniffin.

Dr. Shannon arrived at the office at half-past 7 this morning, and was startled to find the furniture in confusion, burned matches upon the floor, and other evidence of the intrusion of burglars. He called Mrs. Kniffin, and, receiving no reply, became apprehensive that all was not right. Entering a small room directly facing South Broad-st., he nearly stumbled over Miss Purcell, who lay in her nightgown, apparently dead, in the middle of the room. Dr. Shannon summoned help, and with two others quickly made a thorough investigation. Miss Purcell was not dead, but seemed partly unconscious. "Oh, the burglars! Run, Myra, run!" she exclaimed, as Dr. Shannon and the other men lifted her from the floor.

Dr. Cornelius Shepherd was called in to attend her, and at the same time Mrs. Kniffin was found lying dead in her bed, in an adjoining room. The color of a quilt, that still emitted the odor of chloroform, was thrown over her face. Upon its removal, her face was found swollen, about the mouth and chin it was blue. The chin was scratched, as though by finger-nails, but no other marks of violence were visible.

The police, by authority of Prosecutor Stegton, at once took charge of the house. They found burned matches upon the floor, a chair in one spot, a hatchet in another, and still other tools. They say, however, that the tools are not part of a burglar's kit, and they profess to be mystified by the circumstances. Indeed, the fact that bureau drawers were found pulled out and articles of furniture in several rooms disturbed did not convince them that housebreakers of experience had been at work. They could not learn that anything had been taken, nor did they find signs of the forcing of any doors or windows.

Miss Purcell was immediately put to bed. This afternoon she was sufficiently revived to make a statement. She said that she was not unconscious when found upon the floor, but felt as if she were paralyzed. She was unable to move hand or foot. She and Mrs. Kniffin, she said, went to bed at the same time last night. Both were cheerful, and Mrs. Kniffin remarked that she was not sleepy at all. Soon afterward Miss Purcell fell asleep. How long she had slept she could not say, but suddenly she was awakened by a touch from Mrs. Kniffin, who screamed that there was a burglar pushing open the door. Miss Purcell heard the noise at the door, sprang out of bed, and running to the front window, called for help at the top of her voice. Just then, she continued, she was seized and thrown to the floor, and a wet cloth was pressed over her face. That was all she knew until Dr. Shannon and the other men found her, at which time the piece of cloth was still over her face. Miss Purcell was informed that Mrs. Kniffin was dead, and at once became delirious.

Upon the occasion of the visit of burglars at Dr. Kniffin's house in November, the doctor was absent over night. His wife and little son and Miss Purcell were in the house. Miss Purcell said that three men came into her bedroom and one of them held a drawn knife over her as she lay in bed, giving her to understand that it would be used if she attempted to make any outcry. The other two burglars, according to her story, made a tour of the house, examining several pieces of jewelry and discarding all. They secured a small sum of money, but the police never discovered any trace of them.

A post-mortem examination of Mrs. Kniffin will be made to-morrow morning, and Coroner Bower will hold an inquest on Monday.

The police are making no effort at all to find the burglars who are said to have murdered Mrs. Kniffin. Detective Leahy, who has been working on the case all day, says that in his opinion no burglars entered the house. Every door and window was fastened, he asserts, except a door leading from the rear of the premises into the kitchen. This door was left unlocked by Mrs. Kniffin last evening. The cork of a small bottle was found in Mrs. Kniffin's bed; whether or not it had been touched by chloroform could not be determined.

Dr. Kniffin was summoned home by telegraph, and arrived here at half-past 8 to-night. Detective Leahy was at the station, and as soon as Dr. Kniffin alighted from the train, asked the doctor to accompany him to Police Headquarters.

There Dr. Kniffin was put through a long examination as to the reason for his departure and all his movements since yesterday morning. He was frank in all his answers, and was no more agitated than would be natural under the circumstances. He said he had gone to visit relatives of Miss Purcell, at Broadway.

N. J., as adjoining their farm was one which he thought of buying. Miss Purcell spent the holidays with her people there, and he saw her in the station at Philadelphia yesterday. She was waiting for a train for Trenton, and he for one in the opposite direction. He spoke only a word or two with her.

The suspicion of the authorities was shown, also, by the sending of Constable Frank Wheeler early to-day up the Belvidere Railroad to shadow Dr. Kniffin. It is said that Wheeler went under the directions of Coroner Bower. Dr. Kniffin's statement was taken down in writing by Police Justice Matheson.

Later Dr. Kniffin was taken to his own house, the police informing him that they wanted him to make an examination to decide whether or not burglars had stolen anything. Many rumors have been afloat all day, discredibly connecting Dr. Kniffin's name with the tragedy; but until it was learned that the police were eager

to get a statement from him before he could reach his home, no one gave credence to the stories. Dr. Shannon also was at the station when the train arrived, but one of the officers engaged him in conversation, for the purpose of keeping him and Dr. Kniffin apart; the officer so informed several reporters. The excitement about town became intense when Dr. Kniffin was seen in company with Dr. Shannon.

Dr. Kniffin was deeply affected when he reached his home. The officers remained in an outer room as he entered to look upon his dead wife. The doctor made a hasty examination of his apartment, and said he could not be sure that the burglars had taken anything. Rostein Murphy, the father of Mrs. Kniffin, believes that she was the victim of burglars; and, notwithstanding the many rumors in circulation, and the prevalent theory of the police, the great majority of the people here have faith in Miss Purcell's statement. Police Justice Matheson said to-night that Dr. Kniffin gave a detailed account of all his movements from the time he left the city and caught the first train homeward when apprised of his wife's death.

Miss Purcell was asked to-night for a description of the man who chloroformed her; but could give none, further than that he was dark and might have been a negro. The coroner's jury viewed Mrs. Kniffin's body late this afternoon. It is commonly reported that the relations of Dr. Kniffin and his wife, although outwardly pleasant, have been strained for some time. The couple had been married about eleven years. When Dr. Kniffin went away recently, it is alleged that he told one of his friends that he did not know when he would return to Trenton. One of the officials who investigated the case said to-night that it seemed to him that the person or persons who used the chloroform were familiar with the drug, and that it was probably taken from the Kniffins' dental rooms, where it was kept in quantity.

## BOTH ENGINEERS FATALLY HURT

## A DISASTROUS COLLISION ON THE PANAMA RAILROAD.

Panama, Jan. 3.—A collision occurred last evening at San Pablo, on the Panama Railroad. A special train having on board A. L. Rives, the general superintendent of the road, ran into a freight train. The engineers of the two trains are believed to be mortally wounded and Mr. Rives and six other persons were injured.

## THE DEAD EX-EMPEROR OF BRAZIL.

Oporto, Jan. 3.—The body of the ex-Emperor of Brazil was removed today to the Lapa Church. The bier was covered with beautiful wreaths. An imposing procession followed the body to the church. The mourners were all the members of the Imperial family except Dona Pedro. The Duke of Oporto represented the Portuguese royal family. A deputation of Brazilians and foreigners resident in Oporto, headed by the Brazilian ambassador, accompanied the bier. In order to avoid the difficulty of choosing between the Brazilian flag of the empire and the republic, the Portuguese flag was used at the Lapa Church in the funeral ceremonies. The French Consul absent himself, his Government apprehending that his presence would be regarded in Brazil as offensive.

## LABOR TROUBLES IN EUROPE.

Dublin, Jan. 3.—The porters employed by the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway Company have struck for an advance in their wages. Train service on the roads is running irregularly and the express has been withdrawn entirely. The company will endeavor to engage men to take the places of the strikers. The porters are supported in their strike by the employees of other lines.

## CUT DOWN AND SUNK BY THE BRITANNIC.

London, Jan. 3.—The White Star Line steamer Britannic, Captain Davidson, from New York, December 25, for Liverpool, ran into the brigantine Carowitz, from Fowey for Kilmory, in the Irish sea, off the Jersey, last night. The Carowitz, a small schooner, was cut clear away and sank rapidly, filled and sank. The weather was bitter cold, but the crew of the Britannic succeeded in saving all hands from the Carowitz, except the captain, who was drowned.

## DR. TALMAGE IN CONSTANTINOPLE.

Constantinople, Jan. 3.—A public reception was tendered the Rev. Dr. D. W. Talmage, of Brooklyn, and Mrs. Talmage here today, by United States Minister Hirsch. Assembled to honor the guests of the day were the American Consul and many prominent visitors and residents of this city, including a large number of ladies.

## EVERYTHING QUIET ON THE UPPER CONGO.

Brussels, Jan. 3.—Cable dispatches from the Congo Free State say that Governor General Janssens had ascended the River Lomami and found it navigable as far as latitude 4 degrees 27 minutes, at which spot large falls obstruct the further passage of boats. Affairs on the Upper Congo, the dispatches add, are quiet, and the people are prosperous.

## MISS ANDERSON TO APPEAR HERE IN OCTOBER.

London, Jan. 3.—It is announced that Mary Anderson will open a dramatic season at the Broadway Theatre, New York, on October 25.

It was learned last evening from the management of the Broadway Theatre that the announcement of Miss Anderson's appearance next autumn at that playhouse was correct.

## MR. HEADLAUGH SAILS FROM INDIA.

Bombay, Jan. 3.—Charles Headlaugh, who has been visiting India for his health, sailed from this port for England today. Thousands of persons gathered to bid him adieu, and he departed amid an ovation.

## THE INTERNATIONAL SKATING CONTEST.

Amsterdam, Jan. 3.—Myhrer Pander, a Dutchman, won the international skating match at this place today. He covered the distance in 1 minute 24-5 seconds. No Americans engaged in the contest.

## ATTEMPTED MURDER AND SUICIDE.

Montreal, Que., Jan. 3.—Thomas Williams, a brick layer, attempted to cut his wife's throat with a razor this morning, but failed. He then cut his own throat and died instantly.

## THE ART AWARDS AT PARIS.

Paris, Jan. 3.—Many members of the Committee of the Society of Artists will resign their places in order to force re-elections on the question of the justice of the awards made for exhibits in the art department of the recent Exhibition.

## KING HUMBERT THROWN FROM HIS HORSE.

Rome, Jan. 3.—While King Humbert was returning from a hunting trip today he fell from his horse and was somewhat bruised. He remounted, however, and rode home.

## THE STRANDING OF THE PERSEA.

London, Jan. 3.—No lives were lost by the stranding of the Italian steamer Persea, before reported ashore on the island of Corsica. The vessel is still aground, her crew are aboard of her.

## THE PRINCE OF AUSTERSPERG DYING.

Vienna, Jan. 3.—Prince Charles William Philip, head of the house of Austersperg, is dying at Prague from inflammation of the lungs.

## THE SPANISH MINISTRY RESIGNS.

Madrid, Jan. 3.—The Ministry has resigned. Senor Sagasta will attempt to form a new Cabinet on a basis that will reconcile the various Liberal groups.

## SIX NEWSPAPER SENTENCES RESCINDED.

Berlin, Jan. 3.—The Imperial Commission to hear appeals under the socialist law has rescinded six sentences against newspapers.

## LORD TENNYSON NOT ILL.

London, Jan. 3.—The Hampshire Independent denies the reports that Lord Tennyson is ill. He takes his usual daily walks.

## THE BOUVET FLOATED AT ZANZIBAR.

Zanzibar, Jan. 3.—The French dispatch boat Bouvet, which went ashore near here, has been floated. She has lost her propeller and rudder, and is leaking.

## TO CONNECT HALIFAX WITH BERMUDA.

Ottawa, Jan. 3.—The Government has received word that the proposed Imperial cable from Bermuda to Halifax will be completed by the middle of June.

## PRINCE ALBERT VICTOR IN CALCUTTA.

Calcutta, Jan. 3.—Prince Albert Victor, eldest son of the Prince of Wales, arrived here today from Durban. The Marquis of Lansdowne, Viceroy of India, met him at the pier and welcomed him to the city.

city, after which they entered a carriage and drove to the Government House. The streets, which were profusely decorated, were crowded with natives, it being estimated that 100,000 of them gathered to see the Prince. The municipal authorities presented an address to the Prince.

## SCHOOL TRUSTEE ELECTION IN TORONTO.

Toronto, Jan. 3.—An election of separate school trustees was held on Wednesday, when all three candidates who favored secret or ballot voting in such elections were defeated. Protests were entered yesterday against the election of the Rev. Mr. Gibbons and Vice-Chancellor Laurent, on the ground that the former had intimidated voters and the latter was an alien.

## SARAH BERNHARDT'S "JOAN OF ARC" A SUCCESS.

Paris, Jan. 3.—Sarah Bernhardt's "Joan of Arc" is held as a great success. The dramatic scene and the endeavors of the actress to show that Joan is a witch are especially vigorous and dramatic. The impersonation is based upon the theory of Gaston-Lepage that the heroine was subject to hallucinations. M. Gounod has expressed himself as enchanted with Bernhardt.

## FATE OF THE PETERS COMMITTEE.

Berlin, Jan. 3.—Rast's letters from Aden to the Emin Relief Committee here do not mention the previous had news about Dr. Peters. This seems to imply that he had not heard that news, and that his own report is not merely an echo of it.

## THE ROOM IN IRON WARRANTS.

Glasgow, Jan. 3.—Much excitement prevails in the iron market here today. The price of Scotch warrants has advanced to 66 shillings, the highest point reached since the boom set in.

## SKIRMISH BETWEEN TURKS AND CRETANS.

Athens, Jan. 3.—There has been a skirmish between Turks and Cretans, in which many were killed and wounded. Sixteen wounded Turks were brought to Crete.

## THEFT OF A LETTER CONTAINING \$80,000.

Vienna, Jan. 3.—A letter containing \$80,000 has been stolen in transit between this city and Pesth.

## MR. RUSKIN AGAIN EXTREMELY ILL.

London, Jan. 3.—John Ruskin is again extremely ill.

## THE FATHER OF THE HOUSE SERIOUSLY ILL.

Washington, Jan. 3.—Representative William D. Kelley is lying seriously ill at the Ritz Hotel, in this city. He has been confined to his bed for the last ten days, and his friends are prepared for the worst. Judge Kelley is in his seventy-sixth year, a time of life at which almost any ailment might cause alarm, but his present trouble is of the most serious nature, and it is believed to be nothing less than cancer, which is situated below the rear of the jaw and is spreading rapidly into the throat. So quickly has it spread that the Judge is unable to converse now except in whispers, and even then not without great effort and with an accompaniment of much pain. The swallowing of nourishment, too, is a matter of some difficulty, and exercise has for some days been practically out of the question. A number of the Judge's relatives have been here within the last few days, and his daughter, Mrs. Homer, expressed the desire to take him home with her, but the attending physician has advised her that his removal in his present condition was impossible.

## JUDGE KELLEY SUFFERING FROM CANCER OF THE THROAT.

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